United Nations A/62/547–S/2007/672

General Assembly
Security Council

Distr.: General
19 November 2007

Original: English

General Assembly
Sixty-second session
Agenda item 17
The situation in the Middle East

Security Council
Sixty-second year

Letter dated 9 November 2007 from the Permanent Representatives of Iraq and Turkey to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

As you know, the second enlarged meeting of the Foreign Ministers of the Countries Neighbouring Iraq was held in Istanbul on 2 and 3 November 2007.

In addition to Iraq's neighbouring countries, Egypt, Bahrain, the permanent members of the United Nations Security Council and the Group of Eight, as well as the United Nations, the League of Arab States and the European Union were represented at the meeting.

Upon instructions from our respective Governments, we request that you kindly circulate the present letter and the final communiqué of the Istanbul meeting (see annex) as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 17, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Hamid **Al Bayati**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative of Iraq to the United Nations

(*Signed*) Baki **İlkin**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative of Turkey to the United Nations

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Annex to the letter dated 9 November 2007 from the Permanent Representatives of Iraq and Turkey to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Final communiqué of the Ministerial Conference of the Countries Neighbouring Iraq, Egypt, Bahrain, the permanent members of the Security Council and the Group of Eight

Istanbul, 3 November 2007

Upon the invitation of the Republic of Turkey and the Republic of Iraq, the Foreign Ministers of the Countries Neighbouring Iraq, Egypt, Bahrain and the permanent members of the United Nations Security Council and the G-8 held a meeting in Istanbul, Turkey, on 3 November 2007. The United Nations, the Organization of the Islamic Conference, the Arab League and the European Union also took part in the meeting. The meeting was designed to contribute concretely to the efforts of the Government and the people of Iraq to restore permanent peace, stability, and prosperity in their country through invigoration of the existing national reconciliation dialogue, in combating terrorism, strengthening the rule of law and widening participation in the political process. The meeting also serves to help create a stable atmosphere for Iraq and provide an ongoing standing forum for sustained active and energetic support to the Iraqi Government and Iraqi people. The meeting also served the purpose of the participant countries to reiterate their commitment to Iraq's territorial integrity, unity, full sovereignty and independence.

Their Highnesses and Excellencies who participated in the meeting were:

Bahrain	Foreign Minister H.E. Sheikh Khalid Bin Ahmed Al Khalifa
Canada	H.E. Deepak Obhrai, Parliamentary Secretary to the Foreign Minister in charge of Asia-Pacific and Africa
China	Deputy Foreign Minister H.E. Wu Dawei
Egypt	Foreign Minister H.E. Ahmed Aboul Gheith
France	Foreign Minister H.E. Bernard Kouchner
Germany	Foreign Minister H.E. Frank Walter Steinmeier
Iran	Foreign Minister H.E. Manouchehr Mottaki
Iraq	Foreign Minister H.E. Hoshyar Zebari
Italy	Deputy Foreign Minister H.E. Ugo Intini
Japan	Deputy Foreign Minister H.E. Onodera Itsunori
Jordan	Foreign Minister H.E. Abdelelah Al Khatib
Kuwait	Foreign Minister H.E. Sheikh Mohammed Sabah Al Salim Al Sabah
Russian Federation	Deputy Foreign Minister H.E. Alexander Saltanov

Kingdom of Saudi Arabia	Foreign Minister H.E. Prince Saud Al-Faisal
Syria	Foreign Minister H.E. Walid Al-Moualem
Turkey	Foreign Minister H.E. Ali Babacan
United Kingdom	Deputy Foreign Minister H.E. Kim Howells
United States of America	Secretary of State H.E. Condoleezza Rice
United Nations	Secretary General H.E. Ban Ki-moon
EU Presidency (Portugal)	Foreign Minister H.E. Luis Amado
Secretariat of the Council of the EU	Representative Sophie Kisling
EU Commission	Commissioner H.E. Benita Ferrero Waldner
League of Arab States	Secretary General H.E. Amre Moussa
Organization of Islamic Conference	Secretary General H.E. Ekmeleddin İhsanoğlu

The participants agreed to:

1. Reaffirm the independence, full sovereignty, national unity, territorial integrity, Arab and Islamic identity of Iraq; commit to the preservation of Iraq's internationally recognized borders; and pledge adherence to the principle of non-interference in Iraq's internal affairs.

2. Reaffirm full support of the efforts of the constitutionally based, elected Government and Council of Representatives of Iraq to achieve, in a speedy and effective manner, the goals of the Iraqi people for a prosperous, free, independent, united, democratic, and federal Iraq, and the basic right of all Iraqi citizens to participate peacefully in the ongoing political process.

3. Reconfirm the international community's as well as neighbours' commitment to promote peace, stability, and security in Iraq for the people of Iraq, the region, and the international community as a whole.

4. Recognize the value and importance of an ongoing and continuous expanded neighbours process; endorse the forming by the Iraqi Government an ad hoc expanded neighbours "support mechanism" in Baghdad, which will regularly review progress in implementing the conclusions reached at the ministerial meetings and disseminate the information in a timely manner; and welcome the United Nations offer to provide resources to such a "support mechanism", the terms and the mission to be agreed upon by the members of the expanded neighbours process.

5. Reaffirm working groups' functions to provide essential input and recommendations for political level neighbours meetings to enable them to take concrete decisions and contribute to Iraq's ongoing process, as well as regional stability, and in this context, endorse the recommendations proposed by the three working groups already convened and decide to maintain as long as required these working

groups on energy, security, and refugees created at the first expanded neighbours conference held in Sharm el Sheikh; convene as soon as possible the next sessions of these groups on security in Damascus, energy in İstanbul, and displaced persons in Amman, respectively; and invite these groups to submit their progress reports to the next ministerial meeting of the expanded neighbouring countries.

6. Welcome the Iraqi Government's efforts to strengthen the institutions of the representative government, reinforce political dialogue and national reconciliation, assist vulnerable groups, including refugees and internally displaced persons, and promote the protection of human rights and judicial and legal reform, and to foster strong and constructive relations with neighbouring countries.

7. Acknowledge the significance of reaching a common vision of the unity of the people of Iraq among the political parties; and encourage Iraqis to engage in comprehensive political dialogue and national reconciliation for the sake of Iraq's political stability and unity.

8. Welcome the common understanding put forward in the Final Communiqué of the Meeting of the Political Leaders of Iraq and encourage the Government of Iraq to achieve progress on enactment of legislation such as the justice and accountability law; constitutional amendments, gas and oil law, and a financial revenues law; and encourage the Government of Iraq to welcome all Iraqis not guilty of war crimes who disavow violence and terror into the political process.

9. Welcome the Iraqi Government's commitment to disarm and dismantle all militias and illegally armed groups, enforcing the rule of law, and ensuring the State's monopoly on armed forces.

10. Highlight the richness of the multicultural, multisectarian, and multi-ethnic structure of Iraq and the importance of securing and respecting peaceful coexistence of all communities, as well as the Iraqi identity, for the future of Iraq.

11. Call upon UNESCO, ALECSO, ISESCO and IRCICA to contribute to the preservation and revitalization of the historical heritage of Iraq that has been destroyed or damaged due to the war, and welcome active support from the neighbours and international community for this effort.

12. Urge all parties within Iraq to take steps to ensure the protection of civilians and create conditions conducive to the voluntary, safe, dignified, and sustainable return of refugees and internally displaced persons.

13. Recognize the obligation of Iraq and the international community to protect and assist displaced Iraqis by addressing their immediate and foreseeable needs and safeguarding their safety; acknowledge the determined endeavours of the Syrian and Jordanian Governments in generously hosting the Iraqi displaced persons; and urge the international community to increase its support for the Iraqi displaced persons.

14. Commit to delivery of humanitarian and economic assistance in coordination with the Government of Iraq, also by contributing to the International Reconstruction Fund Facility for Iraq.

15. Acknowledge the importance of the International Compact with Iraq and commit to assist the Government of Iraq through political and economic reform, capacity-building, and providing conditions for sustainable development, in this context welcoming the decision of the Paris Club, and call on all States to move forward in addressing Iraq's foreign debt burden.

16. Welcome the new Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Iraq, Staffan de Mistura; support the efforts of the United Nations under Security Council resolution 1770 (2007); and recognize UNAMI's key role, at the request of the Government of Iraq, in assisting and supporting Iraq in promoting national reconciliation and regional dialogue, facilitating elections, implementing constitutional provisions, protecting internally displaced persons and refugees, providing humanitarian relief, and resolving disputed internal boundaries.

17. Urge the maintaining or opening of diplomatic missions in Iraq in an effort to improve bilateral relations.

18. Condemn all acts of terrorism in all its forms in Iraq, call for the immediate cessation of all such acts, support the Iraqi Government's increasing efforts in combating terrorism including all efforts to prevent Iraqi territory from being used as a base for terrorism against neighbouring countries, and take note of the bilateral arrangements concluded between Iraq and neighbouring countries regarding the fight against terrorism.

19. Reaffirm the obligations of all States, in accordance with international law, relevant international agreements, Security Council resolution 1546 (2004) and other relevant resolutions, to combat terrorist activities and prevent the use by terrorists of their territory for supplying, organizing, and launching terrorist operations.

20. Support the joint efforts of Iraq and its neighbouring countries to prevent the transit of terrorists and illegal arms to and from Iraq, re-emphasize the importance of strengthening cooperation between Iraq and its neighbouring countries to control their common borders and prevent all kinds of illicit trafficking, including financial, logistical and all other support for terrorists and terrorist organizations; and reject all use of language that encourages violence and terror.

21. Reconfirm the decisions of the neighbouring countries interior ministers meetings and welcome the conclusions of the last neighbouring countries interior ministers meeting which took place in Kuwait on 23 October 2007.

22. Commend Iraq's neighbours, Egypt and Bahrain for their continued efforts to help Iraq achieve stability, security, unity, and territorial integrity; and underline the importance of the involvement of the League of Arab States and the Organization of the Islamic Conference in

supporting the Iraqi reconciliation process; in this context, reaffirm support for the initiative of the League of Arab States to achieve Iraqi national reconciliation and dialogue, and welcome the initiative of OIC to convene the follow-up meeting of the Mecca Declaration.

23. Take note of the proposal of the Iraqi Council of Representatives to convene a meeting of the Foreign Relations Committees of the neighbouring countries' parliaments next year, to promote an improved political atmosphere and enhance common understanding in order to fulfil the tasks agreed upon at the expanded neighbouring countries conference.

The participants expressed their appreciation to the Republic of Turkey for hosting the conference, and also agreed to hold the next ministerial meeting in Kuwait.